

to help in this crisis, and Miss Simpson responded wholeheartedly. Additionally, Miss Simpson painted cabinets for Angel's Attic, a resale and outreach ministry of the Whites Chapel United Methodist Church.

The Girl Scouts of America promotes a positive influence for young women of today. I am honored to represent Rebecca Simpson in earning the highest award bestowed in Girl Scouts. I commend her commitment and dedication for the betterment of her life, her community, and her country.

HONORING JASON BAUR

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. GRAVES. Madam Speaker, I proudly pause to recognize Jason Michael Baur of Kearney, Missouri. Jason is a very special young man who has exemplified the finest qualities of citizenship and leadership by taking an active part in the Boy Scouts of America, Troop 397, and earning the most prestigious award of Eagle Scout.

Jason has been very active with his troop, participating in many scout activities. Over the many years Jason has been involved with scouting, he has not only earned numerous merit badges, but also the respect of his family, peers, and community.

Madam Speaker, I proudly ask you to join me in commending Jason Michael Baur for his accomplishments with the Boy Scouts of America and for his efforts put forth in achieving the highest distinction of Eagle Scout.

EQUAL PAY DAY

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Madam Speaker, I am honored to rise here today to recognize Tuesday, April 22, 2008, as Equal Pay Day. National and community organizations alike make this a national day of action to promote equal pay for women and minorities. It is a day to recognize the wage gap that exists between men and women and offer solutions that will address and remedy this economic injustice.

It is no accident that a Tuesday in April is chosen as the day in which we recognize income inequality. April symbolizes the month when women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous year and Tuesday represents the day on which women's wages equal men's wages from the previous week. According to 2007 statistics by the United States Census Bureau, on average women are paid 77 cents for every dollar that their male counterparts earn. For a country where 46 percent of its workforce is female, this is unacceptable.

It is clear that we are not moving fast enough in promoting pay equality. Some reports estimate that if we continue at the current pace, the wage gap will not be closed until 2057. That is far too long for this discrimination to continue. We must promote all efforts to encourage employers to pay women

fairly, educate women on negotiating appropriate salaries, and enforce current equal pay legislation.

It is imperative that we protect every American's right to earn a fair wage based solely on qualifications and performance. There is no room in the American workforce for perpetuating gender and race stereotypes. By eliminating pay discrimination we will be ensuring that we will have the best and most productive workforce.

I applaud all Americans who participate in and support Equal Pay Day. The first step in correcting this inequity is by alerting others it exists. It is my hope that together we can do this and ultimately be the catalyst for change.

EXPRESSING SYMPATHY TO VICTIMS AND FAMILIES OF COLORADO SHOOTINGS

SPEECH OF

HON. BETTY McCOLLUM

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 14, 2008

Ms. McCOLLUM of Minnesota. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Resolution 886 which expresses sympathy to the victims and families of the tragic acts of violence in Colorado Springs, CO and Arvada, CO.

The events last year in Colorado Springs, CO and Arvada, CO were another sad example of gun violence in this country. The nation is still mourning the loss of life at Northern Illinois University, Virginia Tech, the mall in St. Lake City, the Red Lake Indian Reservation, and in countless other communities. On December 9, 2007, Tiffany Johnson, Philip Crouse, Stephanie Works, and Rachel Works were tragically killed and David Works, Judy Purcell, Larry Bourbonnais, Dan Griebenow, and Charlie Blanch injured by bullets fired from an assault rifle and one of two handguns wielded by the assailant.

Expressing sympathy to the victims and families of this tragedy is not enough. Far too many people are the victims of gun violence in our nation, including the hundreds who are killed and thousands injured in unintentional shootings. The Federal Government has an obligation and moral responsibility to prevent this type of violence, including mandatory background checks at gun stores and gun shows and requiring safety devices that prevent guns from being used by someone other than the owner.

Congress must reinstate the ban on assault style weapons and broaden it to include enhanced restrictions on many different assault-style guns that were not previously covered. A new ban should also direct the Attorney General to maintain a weapon database system of guns that have been used in violent crimes and submit the record to Congress each year. This is a necessary public safety measure that will allow law enforcement to do their job and combat crime.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in honoring the victims of gun violence in Colorado Springs, CO and Arvada, CO and working together on common-sense gun laws that help to prevent tragedies like these from recurring.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. EDWARD J. MARKEY

OF MASSACHUSETTS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, April 22, 2008

Mr. MARKEY. Madam Speaker, on April 16th and 17th, 2008, I was unavoidably absent from the House due to an injury, and missed rollcall votes 192, 193, 194, 200, 203, and 204. Had I been present, I would have voted "yea" on rollcalls 192, 193, 194, 200, 203, and 204.

RECOGNIZING CAROLYN KULIG

HON. KENNY MARCHANT

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, April 22, 2008

Mr. MARCHANT. Madam Speaker, I rise today to recognize Carolyn Kulig on achieving the Girl Scout Gold Award. Receiving the Gold Award is a testament to Miss Kulig's leadership, citizenship, and service to her community.

For her Gold Award project, Carolyn Kulig decorated the library at the Easter Seals facility in Carrollton, Texas. Miss Temple painted book shelves in lively colors and added color to the walls. She also collected books and videos through donations that will be given to low-income families that have children being treated at the facility. Her efforts will live the spirit of all that use the library at Easter Seals.

The Girl Scouts of America promotes a positive influence for young women of today. I am honored to represent Carolyn Kulig in earning the highest award bestowed in Girl Scouts. I commend her commitment and dedication for the betterment of her life, her community, and her country.

ENSURING CONTINUED ACCESS TO FEDERAL STUDENT LOANS ACT OF 2008

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 17, 2008

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the State of the Union had under consideration of the bill (H.R. 5715) to ensure continued availability of access to the Federal student loan program for students and families:

Mr. CONYERS. Madam Chairman, today I rise to support H.R. 5715, the Ensuring Continued Access to Federal Student Loans Act of 2008. As current turmoil in the U.S. financial markets make obtaining and affording student loans more and more difficult, today we take an affirmative step to relieve that pressure on students and families by providing greater access to Federal loans. This legislation: reduces borrowers' reliance on costlier private college loans and encourage responsible borrowing; gives parent borrowers more time to begin paying off their Federal PLUS college loans; helps struggling homeowners pay for college; provides the U.S. Secretary of Education additional tools to safeguard access to